



# U.S. Senator Judd Gregg, Chairman

## Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions

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### **JOINT HEARING CONVENES ON NIH OVERSIGHT**

*Senate HELP and House Energy & Commerce Committees  
Focus Hearing on NIH Roadmap and Issue of Accountability*

**Washington, DC** –Senator Judd Gregg (R-NH), Chairman of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions co-chaired a joint oversight hearing with Congressman Mike Bilirakis (R-FL), of the House Energy and Commerce Committee today specifically on the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Senators and Representatives convened to ensure the priorities, policies and structures of the NIH match the directions in which science is moving.

“The HELP Committee has been engaging in a process of oversight activities all year, of which this hearing is only one part. We have been reaching out to patient groups and the research community in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of NIH. Where reforms are needed, this Committee will act,” said Gregg.

“It is important that NIH funds only the best science and projects that bring help and hope to people suffering with real health problems. It is critical that the publicly-supported biomedical research of the NIH focuses its priorities, first on diseases that are responsible for the majority of the morbidity and mortality among Americans, and secondly, on research areas not currently targeted by private sector efforts. Further, every project funded by the agency must be consistent with good science, the agency’s mission and the strategic plans of the relevant Institute or Center. The taxpayers have a lot invested in the NIH and every funding decision must be defensible,” said Gregg.

“Since cooperation rather than fragmentation is the order of the day, I will actively seek ways to limit the proliferation of new administrative structures at NIH, particularly those originated by Congressional mandates. Science should be primarily led by scientists, public health officials and public stakeholders. Congress must not, through ever-increasing research mandates and legislation requiring new NIH structures, pick the research ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ at NIH,” said Gregg.

“Today’s hearing was a good first step towards ensuring we can match biomedical research policy with scientific progress,” said Gregg.

Testimony of today’s hearing will be available at the Committee website, <http://labor.senate.gov>

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